AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of using an origination shim to replicate, ~~for replication~~ by hot-embossing, hot-stamping, hot foil-stamping or plastic injection moulding, ~~of~~ an optically variable transitory image relief pattern, wherein the ~~characterized by the use of an~~ origination shim is fabricated ~~through~~ by a micromachining process ~~involving~~comprising the successive steps of photolithography, etch-mask layer patterning, and bulk substrate potassium hydroxide wet chemical etching ~~steps~~and wherein the bulk substrate consists of <100> oriented monocrystalline silicon.

2-5. (Cancelled).

6. (Currently Amended) A method according to claim 1 comprising a step consisting of the production of a ~~Nickel~~nickel shim obtained by copying said origination shim through successive ~~Nickel~~nickel electroforming steps.

7. (Previously Presented) A shim obtained according to claim 1.

8. (Currently Amended) A shim according to claim 7 that is capable of replicating~~through the use of which~~ transitory image relief patterns displaying a contrast switch between foreground and background images when rotated through 90° at a fixed viewing angle offset to the normal ~~can be replicated~~.

9. (Currently Amended) A shim according to claim 7 that is capable of replicting~~through the use of which~~ a background transitory image relief pattern and a foreground transitory image relief pattern image ~~can be replicated~~ such that the foreground image relief pattern is hidden by the background relief pattern, when the replicated image is tilted away from the observer.

10. (Currently Amended) A shim according to claim 7 that is capable of replicating~~through the use of which~~ a background transitory image relief pattern and a foreground transitory image relief pattern image ~~can be replicated~~ such that the foreground transitory image relief pattern, non-apparent when viewed perpendicular to the plane of the image replica, appears against the background relief pattern, when the replicated image is tilted away from the observer.

11. (Currently Amended) A shim according to claim 7 that is capable of replicating~~through the use of which~~ prism-like relief elements (PLREs) that define an image, subdivided into portions composed of either of three sub-types of PLRE array~~;~~, one sub-type consisting of PLREs oriented in a given direction and arranged in a row-wise staggered grid, a second sub-type consisting of PLREs rotated by 90° in the same plane as the first subtype also arranged in a row-wise staggered grid, and a third subtype combining both of the first two subtypes in such a way that the PLREs defining the second subtype are placed symmetrically in the interstices formed by the first subtype, wherein said image displays various visual contrast switching effects between the portions of the image assigned to each of the PLRE array sub-types upon,

i) rotation~~Rotation~~ of the tilted image about the normal~~.~~, or

ii) tilting~~Tilting~~ of the image about the viewing angle.

12. (Currently Amended) A shim obtained according to claim 7 wherein said shim is fabricated during the same series of micromachining process steps, and from which a marking can be replicated combining optically variable effects comprising:

(a) transitory image relief patterns displaying a contrast switch between foreground and background images when rotated through 90 at a fixed viewing angle offset to the normal can be replicated;

(b) a background transitory image relief pattern and a foreground transitory image relief pattern image can be replicated such that the foreground image relief pattern is hidden by the background relief pattern, when the replicated image is tilted away from the observer;

(c) a background transitory image relief pattern and a foreground transitory image relief pattern image can be replicated such that the foreground transitory image relief pattern, non-apparent when viewed perpendicular to the plane of the image replica, appears against the background relief pattern, when the replicated image is tilted away from the observer; and

(d) prism-like relief elements (PLREs) define an image, subdivided into portions composed of either of three sub-types of PLRE array; one sub-type consisting of PLREs oriented in a given direction and arranged in a row-wise staggered grid, a second sub-type consisting of PLREs rotated by 90° in the same plane as the first subtype also arranged in a row-wise staggered grid and a third subtype combining both of the first two subtypes in such a way that the PLREs defining the second subtype are placed symmetrically in the interstices formed by the first subtype, wherein said image displays various visual contrast switching effects between the portions of the image assigned to each of the PLRE array sub-types upon,

i) rotation~~Rotation~~ of the tilted image about the normal~~.~~, or

ii) tilting~~Tilting~~ of the image about the viewing angle.

13. (Previously Presented) A transitory image structure characterized by the use of a shim obtained according to claim 7.

14. (Original) A transitory image structure according to claim 13 wherein the relief elements are defined by raised or depressed portions of a substrate.

15. (Previously Presented) A transitory image structure according to claim 13 wherein the relief elements are embossed in a substrate.

16. (Previously Presented) A transitory image structure according to claim 13 wherein the relief elements are hot-stamped on a substrate comprising two or more distinct layers.

17. (Previously Presented) A transitory image structure according to claim 13 wherein the relief elements comprise portions of ink.

18. (Previously Presented) A transitory image structure according to claim 13 wherein the relief elements are intaglio printed on a substrate.

19. (Previously Presented) An object carrying a transitory image structure according to claim 13.

20. (Currently Amended) An object according to claim 19 obtained by plastic injection moulding incorporating a transitory image structure for which a~~the~~ marking and an~~the~~ object are fabricated during substantially the same injection moulding step.